

SUBCHAPTER H—PROGRAM REGULATIONS (CONTINUED)

PART 1940—GENERAL

Subparts A–F [Reserved]

Subpart G—Environmental Program

Sec.

- 1940.301 Purpose.
- 1940.302 Definitions.
- 1940.303 General policy.
- 1940.304 Special policy.
- 1940.305 Policy implementation.
- 1940.306 Environmental responsibilities within the National Office.
- 1940.307 Environmental responsibilities within the State Office.
- 1940.308 Environmental responsibilities at the District and County Office levels.
- 1940.309 Responsibilities of the prospective applicant.
- 1940.310 Categorical exclusions from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews.
- 1940.311 Environmental assessments for Class I actions.
- 1940.312 Environmental assessments for Class II actions.
- 1940.313 Actions that normally require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- 1940.314 Criteria for determining a significant environmental impact.
- 1940.315 Timing of the environmental review process.
- 1940.316 Responsible officials for the environmental review process.
- 1940.317 Methods for ensuring proper implementation of categorical exclusions.
- 1940.318 Completing environmental assessments for Class II actions.
- 1940.319 Completing environmental assessments for Class I actions.
- 1940.320 Preparing EISs.
- 1940.321 Use of completed EIS.
- 1940.322 Record of decision.
- 1940.323 Preparing supplements to EIS's.
- 1940.324 Adoption of EIS or environmental assessment prepared by another Federal Agency.
- 1940.325 FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 as a cooperating Agency.
- 1940.326 FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 as a lead Agency.
- 1940.327 Tiering.
- 1940.328 State Environmental Policy Acts.
- 1940.329 Commenting on other Agencies' EIS's.
- 1940.330 Monitoring.
- 1940.331 Public involvement.
- 1940.332 Emergencies.

1940.333 Applicability to planning assistance.

1940.334 Direct participation of State Agencies in the preparation of FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 EISs.

1940.335 Environmental review of FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 proposals for legislation.

1940.336 Contracting for professional services.

1940.337–1940.349 [Reserved]

1940.350 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

EXHIBIT A TO SUBPART G—DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION

EXHIBIT B TO SUBPART G—DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

EXHIBIT C TO SUBPART G—IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR THE FARMLAND PROTECTION POLICY ACT; EXECUTIVE ORDER 11988, FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT; EXECUTIVE ORDER 11990, PROTECTION OF WETLANDS; AND DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION 9500-3, LAND USE POLICY

EXHIBIT D TO SUBPART G—IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

EXHIBIT E TO SUBPART G—IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT

EXHIBIT F TO SUBPART G—IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR THE COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES ACT

EXHIBIT G TO SUBPART G [RESERVED]

EXHIBIT H TO SUBPART G—ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR CLASS II ACTIONS

EXHIBIT I TO SUBPART G—FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

EXHIBIT J TO SUBPART G—LOCATIONS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATION'S REGIONAL OFFICES

EXHIBIT K TO SUBPART G—LOCATIONS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE'S WETLAND COORDINATORS

EXHIBIT L TO SUBPART G—EXCEPTIONS TO RESTRICTIONS OF COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES ACT

EXHIBIT M TO SUBPART G—IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSERVATION OF WETLANDS AND HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AFFECTING FARMER PROGRAM LOANS AND LOANS TO INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL CORPORATIONS

Subpart H [Reserved]

§ 1940.301

Subpart I—Truth in Lending—Real Estate Settlement Procedures

- 1940.401 Truth in lending.
- 1940.402–1940.405 [Reserved]
- 1940.406 Real estate settlement procedures.

Subparts J–K [Reserved]

Subpart L—Methodology and Formulas for Allocation of Loan and Grant Program Funds

- 1940.551 Purpose and general policy.
- 1940.552 Definitions.
- 1940.553–1940.554 [Reserved]
- 1940.555 Insured Farm Operating loan funds.
- 1940.556 Guaranteed Farm Operating loan funds.
- 1940.557 Insured Farm Ownership loan funds.
- 1940.558 Guaranteed Farm Ownership loan funds.
- 1940.559 Farmer Programs and Indian Land Acquisition appropriations not allocated by State.
- 1940.560 Guarantee Rural Rental Housing Program.
- 1940.561–1940.562 [Reserved]
- 1940.563 Section 502 non-subsidized guaranteed Rural Housing (RH) loans.
- 1940.564 Section 502 subsidized guaranteed Rural Housing loans.
- 1940.565 Section 502 subsidized Rural Housing loans.
- 1940.566 Section 504 Housing Repair loans.
- 1940.567 Section 504 Housing Repair grants.
- 1940.568 Single Family Housing programs appropriations not allocated by State.
- 1940.569–1940.574 [Reserved]
- 1940.575 Section 515 Rural Rental Housing (RRH) loans.
- 1940.576 Rental Assistance (RA) for new construction.
- 1940.577 Rental Assistance (RA) for existing projects.
- 1940.578 Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) program.
- 1940.579 Multiple Family Housing appropriations not allocated by State.
- 1940.580–1940.584 [Reserved]
- 1940.585 Community Facility loans.
- 1940.586–1940.587 [Reserved]
- 1940.588 Business and Industry Guaranteed and Direct Loans.
- 1940.589 Rural Business Enterprise Grants.
- 1940.590 [Reserved]
- 1940.591 Community Program Guaranteed loans.
- 1940.592 Community facilities grants.
- 1940.593 Rural Business Opportunity Grants.
- 1940.594–1940.600 [Reserved]
- EXHIBIT A TO SUBPART L [RESERVED]
- EXHIBIT B TO SUBPART L—SECTION 515 NON-PROFIT SET ASIDE (NPSA)
- EXHIBIT C TO SUBPART L—HOUSING IN UNDER-SERVED AREAS

7 CFR Ch. XVIII (1–1–06 Edition)

Subparts M–S [Reserved]

Subpart T—System for Delivery of Certain Rural Development Programs

- 1940.951 General.
- 1940.952 [Reserved]
- 1940.953 Definitions.
- 1940.954 State participation.
- 1940.955 Distribution of program funds to designated States.
- 1940.956 State rural economic development review panel.
- 1940.957 State coordinator.
- 1940.958 Designated agency.
- 1940.959 Area plan.
- 1940.960 Federal employee panel members.
- 1940.961 Allocation of appropriated funds.
- 1940.962 Authority to transfer direct loan amounts.
- 1940.963 Authority to transfer guaranteed loan amounts.
- 1940.964 [Reserved]
- 1940.965 Processing project preapplications/applications.
- 1940.966–1940.967 [Reserved]
- 1940.968 Rural Economic Development Review Panel Grant (Panel Grant).
- 1940.969 Forms, exhibits, and subparts.
- 1940.970 [Reserved]
- 1940.971 Delegation of authority.
- 1940.972–1940.999 [Reserved]
- 1940.1000 OMB control number.

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Subparts A–F [Reserved]

Subpart G—Environmental Program

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§ 1940.301 Purpose.

(a) This subpart contains the major environmental policies of the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354. It also provides the procedures and guidelines for preparing the environmental impact analyses required for a series of Federal laws, regulations, and Executive orders within one environmental document. The timing and use of this environmental document within the FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354 decision-making process is also outlined.

(b) This subpart is intended to be consistent with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations

for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 40 CFR parts 1500–1508. CEQ's regulations will not be repeated in this subpart except when essential for clarification of important procedural or substantive points. Otherwise, citations to applicable sections of the regulations will be provided. The CEQ regulations will be available at all FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354 offices.

(c) This subpart is designed to integrate the requirements of NEPA with other planning and environmental review procedures required by law, or by Agency practice, so that all such procedures run concurrently rather than consecutively. The environmental document, which results from the implementation of this subpart, provides on a project basis a single reference point for the Agency's compliance and/or implementation of the following requirements and policies:

- (1) The National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4321;
- (2) Safe Drinking Water Act—Section 1424(e), 42 U.S.C. 300h;
- (3) Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1531;
- (4) Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, 16 U.S.C. 1271;
- (5) The National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470 (See subpart F of part 1901 of this chapter for more specific implementation procedures);
- (6) Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 469 (See subpart F of part 1901 of this chapter for more specific implementation procedures);
- (7) Coastal Zone Management Act—Section 307(c) (1) and (2), 16 U.S.C. 1456;
- (8) Farmland Protection Policy Act, subtitle I, Pub. L. 97–98;
- (9) Coastal Barrier Resources Act, Pub. L. 97–348;
- (10) Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment (See subpart F of part 1901 of this chapter for more specific implementation procedures);
- (11) Executive Order 11514, Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality;
- (12) Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management;
- (13) Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands;

(14) Title 7, parts 1b and 1c, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Agriculture's National Environmental Policy Act; Final Policies and Procedures;

(15) Title 7, part 3100, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Agriculture's Enhancement, Protection, and Management of the Cultural Environment (See subpart F of part 1901 of this chapter for more specific implementation procedures);

(16) Title 7, part 658, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Farmland Protection Policy;

(17) Title 87, part 12, Code of Federal Regulations, Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation;

(18) Departmental Regulation 9500–3, Land Use Policy (See exhibit A of this subpart);

(19) Departmental Regulation 9500–4, Fish and Wildlife Policy.

(d) The primary objectives of this subpart are for the Agency to make better decisions by taking into account potential environmental impacts of proposed projects and by working with FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103–354 applicants, other Federal agencies, Indian tribes, State and local governments, and interested citizens and organizations in order to formulate actions that advance the program goals in a manner that will protect, enhance, and restore environmental quality. To accomplish these objectives, the identification of potentially significant impacts on the human environment is mandated to occur early in the Agency's planning and decisionmaking processes. Important decision points are identified. The completion of the environmental review process is coordinated with these decision points, and this review must be completed prior to the Agency's first major decision on whether or not to participate in the proposal. This early availability of the results of the environmental review process is intended to ensure that Agency decisions are based on an understanding of their environmental consequence, as well as the consequences of alternative courses of action.

(e) Reducing delays, duplication of effort, and superfluous analyses are

provided for in this subpart. FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 environmental documents are to be supported by accurate analyses and will concentrate on the issues that are timely and relevant to the action in question, rather than amassing needless detail. Such documents and their preparation and review will be coordinated with other Federal or State agencies jointly participating in proposed actions or related actions, in order to avoid duplication of effort, and to achieve a coordinated and timely response.

(f) Public involvement is desirable, and to facilitate public involvement, environmental documents will be available to interested citizens as early in the decisionmaking process as possible and before decisions are made. Provisions are included for citizens or interested parties to express their views and any concerns.

(g) The FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 officials responsible for the environmental review process are identified.

(h) The FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 actions covered by this subpart include:

- (1) Financial assistance to include grants, loans, and guarantees,
- (2) Subdivision approvals,
- (3) The management, leasing and sale of inventory property, and
- (4) Other major federal actions such as proposals for legislation and the issuance of regulations.

§ 1940.302 Definitions.

Following is a list of definitions that apply to the implementation of this subpart. Please note that § 1940.301(b) of this subpart refers to the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, 40 CFR parts 1500-1508. Consequently, the definitions contained in part 1508 of the Council's regulations apply to this subpart, as well as those listed below.

(a) *Emergency circumstance.* One involving an immediate or imminent danger to public health or safety.

(b) *Environmental review documents.* The documents required by this subpart for the purpose of documenting

FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354's compliance with the environmental laws and regulations applicable to the FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 actions covered in this subpart. These documents include:

(1) Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 1940-22, "Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions,"

(2) Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 1940-21, "Environmental Assessment of Class I Action,"

(3) Environmental Assessment for Class II Actions (exhibit H of this subpart), and

(4) Environmental Impact Statements (EIS).

(c) *Flood or flooding.* A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of land areas, from the overflow of inland and/or tidal waters, and/or the rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source. Two important classifications of floods are as follows.

(1) A one-percent chance flood or based flood—A flood of a magnitude that occurs once every 100 years on the average. Within any one-year period there is one chance in 100 of the occurrence of such a flood. Most importantly, however, the cumulative risk of flooding increases with time. Statistically, there is about one chance in five that a flood of this magnitude will occur within a 20-year period, the length of time commonly defined as the useful life of a facility. Over a 30-year period, the life of a typical mortgage, the probability of such a flood occurring increases to greater than one chance in four.

(2) A 0.2-percent chance flood—A flood of a magnitude that occurs once every 500 years on the average. (Within any one-year period there is one chance in 500 of the occurrence of such a flood.) As with the one-percent chance flood, the cumulative risk of this flood occurring also increases with time.

(d) *Floodplains.* Lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters, including flood-prone areas of offshore islands. At a minimum, floodplains consist of those